

Festival for Bright Sparks

A new British Council Festival of Ideas aims to spark the creativity of our young people of today, our innovators and leaders of tomorrow.

– By Jeff Streeter

Innovation has become the buzzword of the decade. Almost everyone on all sides of the fence across the arts, business, government and education agrees that it is the key to our future, in one way or another. I don't disagree. But for me, what's just as important is to foster creativity. Creativity sparks innovation. Without one, there can't be the other.

When we at the British Council talk about creativity, we don't just mean in relation to the arts; instead we see it as having a vital role to play across all areas of society. By creativity, we mean promoting economic and social entrepreneurialism, imagining and pursuing novel ideas, judging value and developing curiosity. Creativity underpins scientific and technological advancement. It drives forward our economies and social development and enables us to contribute more fully as citizens. It is hard to imagine any aspect of our fast-changing lives where we do not draw on creativity and its vast spectrum of capabilities. It is essential to the human condition.



This is the backdrop to our new British Council festival SPARK: The Science and Art of Creativity, which celebrates creativity across the arts, sciences and education and offers a platform for cultural exchange between the UK and Hong Kong.

SPARK is a place for debate, inspiration and visionary thinking. A Festival of Ideas, it takes place at Tai Kwun, Hong Kong's new Centre for Heritage and Arts, from 18-20 January. With more than 30 events over three days and 50 creative and education partners

Images of Tai Kwun (photo credits: Tai Kwun)



JC Contemporary



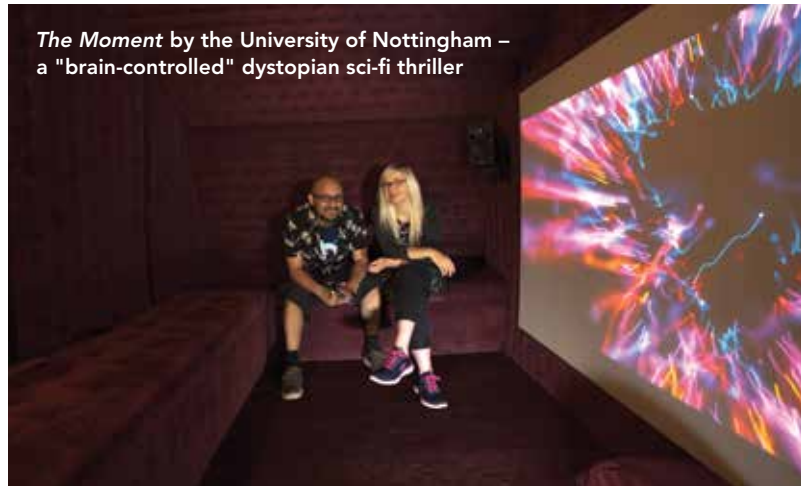
Block 01 Police Headquarters Block



Laundry Steps

from the UK and Hong Kong, SPARK will open eyes and ears with interactive experiences, provocative performances, stimulating talks, installations, exhibitions and other innovative happenings. As well as the core Tai Kwun programme, select satellite events will take place in other venues across the city and, to engage with students throughout wider Hong Kong, the festival also features a schools' outreach programme. Although open to everyone, SPARK is principally aimed at the under 30s in a bid to ignite curiosity and creativity in the younger generations. All events are free but some need pre-registration at www.britishcouncil.hk/en/spark.

SPARK is definitely not a one-way street. Core to its success is creating collaborations and connections: connections between art and science, young and old, old and new and most importantly, between the UK and Hong Kong. With this in mind, UK and Hong Kong festival partners working together on SPARK include over 15 Higher Education Institutes (HEIs),



The Moment by the University of Nottingham – a "brain-controlled" dystopian sci-fi thriller

organisations such as the UK and Hong Kong Science Museums, the Natural History Museum, the British Library, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, outdoor theatre company Walk The Plank, the Hong Kong Design Centre, Hong Kong Design Institute and many more.

Festival visitors can become superheroes, travel through time or create their own brain-controlled sci-fi thriller in a provocative and stimulating

programme curated around four themes: Art Meets Science, Altered Realities, Future Skills and Creative Cities. So come along and show us your SPARK at Tai Kwun in January and help us build a shared future through creativity for both the young people of the UK and Hong Kong, our innovators and leaders of tomorrow. 

Please see next page for SPARK festival highlights.



Become a superhero and save the day in *Prison Break* by the University of Nottingham



Jeff Streeter
Director of the British Council in Hong Kong

SPARK: The Science and Art of Creativity is a new British Council Festival of Ideas that takes place in Tai Kwun, 18-20 January.

www.britishcouncil.hk/en/spark #SPARKhk2019

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities.

www.britishcouncil.hk



SPARK FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

ART MEETS SCIENCE

Creativity is born when art meets science. Interact with some of the UK and Hong Kong's creative visionaries working at the crossover of these two mediums. The University of Kent presents *Cellular Dynamics*, a performance blending cutting-edge biological research with a live recital by distinguished pianist Linda Yim of the Hong Kong New Music Ensemble. Students from Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts collaborate with UK artists from Trinity Laban's Conservatoire of Music and Dance to produce *CoLab Journeys*, a unique and experimental public performance of dance and originally-composed music, with a soundscape created using the voices of the participants.



Cellular Dynamics by the University of Kent
(photo credit: Dan Lloyd)

ALTERED REALITIES

From how to harness AR and VR to drive innovation in higher education to reimagining the past, immerse yourself in the parallel universes of AR and VR. The University of Nottingham's *The Moment* is a "brain-controlled" dystopian sci-fi thriller using a NeuroSky headset to detect participants' EEG brainwaves, which affect the film's edit, sound mix and narrative. With over 18 billion possible narrative combinations, lucky participants can create their own unique versions of the movie. *Prison Break* by Coventry University and the Hong Kong Design Institute invites audience members to join a team of superheroes seeking to recapture dangerous escapees before they wreak havoc on Tai Kwun – using just their phones, ingenuity and English language skills.

FUTURE SKILLS

How can young people in the UK and Hong Kong prepare for life and work in a globalised society? Learn about the creative skills and knowledge required to prosper in the face of AI, machine learning and other technological advancements. Theatr na nÓg's musical theatre extravaganza *Eye of the Storm* takes STEM education to the stage, featuring an original music score by Grammy Award winning songwriter Amy Wadge, who co-wrote Ed Sheeran's hit song "Thinking Out Loud". Aston University's School of Engineering and Applied Science will present *Smart Cities Need Smart Students*, an interactive exhibition demonstrating study routes for ambitious students who want to be part of the smart solution.



Eye of the Storm by Theatr na nÓg
(photo credit: Simon Gough Photography)

CREATIVE CITIES

Artists, scientists and designers explore the role creativity can play in the sustainability of developed urban areas. Share your opinions at Hong Kong Design Centre's *Streetshop*, an interactive exhibition gathering the public's thoughts on quality of life in Hong Kong. Newcastle University's *Making the Invisible Visible* shows the world's largest real-time urban sensing datasets and paints a live picture of pollution. While *Migrant Workers: Seen and Heard* is a collaboration between Hong Kong-born musician and writer Emmy the Great and British data journalist Mona Chalabi, who will transform Hong Kong statistics on migrant domestic workers into visuals and sound.



Emmy the Great and Mona Chalabi

(photo credit: Ashley Batz for Wolcott Takemoto)